

PERFIN "GIS" from Rosemary Smith

In May I bought a cover which did not have a full identity of the user on the envelope. The envelope was obviously from a private individual, not from a business. I deduced this was because of the size of the envelope, 4½ x 3½", the quality of the paper, the educated hand of the written address and the inscription on the flap in good quality print, "Hurworth upon Tees, Darlington".

The stamp was a 1d lilac, the date JA 4 91 and the post-town "DARLINGTON". The perfins was G2857.01 G.J.S 10,7,13 4½mm. I do not have a loose copy of this perfins to check any postmarks.

I sent all these details to the 'Guru', John Nelson, who wrote back:

Your query, presented a problem to begin with. Hurworth upon Tees in the 1890s was mainly agricultural and noted for the Hurworth Foxhounds but there was very little in the village in the way of commerce or industry. Certainly there was nothing in the commercial director to fit with the initials GJS.

A bit more reading however produced the answer in that among the principal landowners I found George John Scurfield resident at Hurworth House, Hurworth upon Tees, Darlington, C Durham. He is the obvious identity but he does not appear to have been in business of any kind, apart perhaps managing his land, or the holder of any position so there is no indication as to why he needed his own perfins.

I sent these details to Roy as I thought it may be an addition to his "Peerage, Gentry, and Perfins" display which also appears in this Bulletin. Roy replied:

*All the people in my article were a "Sir " or higher in the pecking order. I looked in the 1881 census to see what I could find - bullseye!
George J Scurfield Head Age 71 Occ. Justice of the Peace
George J Scurfield Son Age 29 Occ. Practising Barrister*

Unfortunately, it doesn't help understand why he (presumably the son) might have used a perfins.